

6 September 2019

## Namoi Valley

### Water allocation update

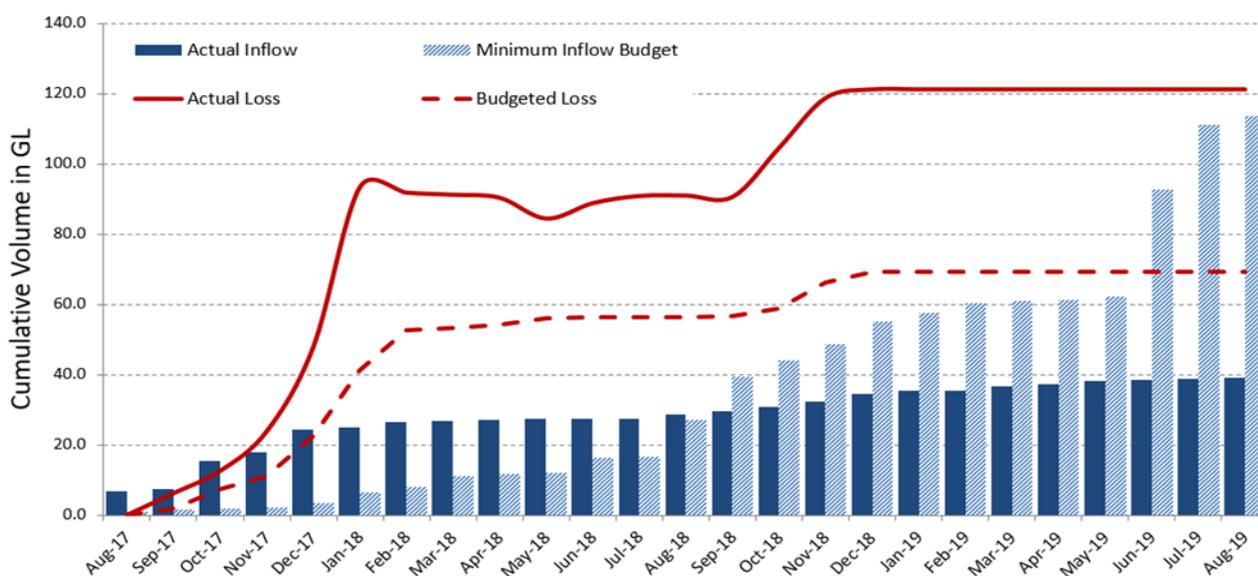
Limited rainfall in the Namoi catchment in August produced no net inflows to the storages. As a result, high security allocations remain unchanged with **no water allocation to general security users**. All other license categories have received their maximum allocation for this water year.

2019-20	High Security	General Security	Drought Stage
Upper Namoi Valley	75%	0%	 Stage 3
Lower Namoi Valley	75%	0%	 Stage 4

Keepit Dam is 1 per cent full, holding 10,700 megalitres (ML), while Split Rock Dam is just 2 per cent full, holding about 10,900 ML.

Currently, storages need at least 85,000 ML of inflow before normal regulated river operations can resume.

The occurrence of this significant shortfall can be seen in Figure 1, which shows that actual inflows are now much less than the minimums assumed, coupled with actual losses exceeding those budgeted, leading to the significant shortfall in water available.



**Figure 1: Cumulative inflow and loss since last general security allocation compared to the budget**

### Drought stage and restrictions

The NSW Extreme Events Policy introduced a staged approach from one to four to manage extreme circumstances. Currently, the Upper Namoi and Lower Namoi is at Stage 3 and Stage 4 respectively. At this drought stage, if there is insufficient water available to provide a full high security allocation, then access to general security water, including carryover water, is restricted to the same or greater extent than the high security allocation to support higher priority commitments. More details on how restrictions are imposed on carryover water can be found in the following link: [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/272154/imposing-restrictions-on-carryover-water-in-regulated-rivers.pdf](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/272154/imposing-restrictions-on-carryover-water-in-regulated-rivers.pdf)

### Key facts

- Storage inflows since the last general security allocation in August 2017 have been just 39gigalitres (GL). This is well below the previous historical minimum of 114 GL (August 1993 to August 1995).
- Upper Namoi general security water access licence holders are allowed to access 75 per cent of the volume of water in their accounts at 1 July 2019.
- Lower Namoi general security water access license holders are restricted from accessing any water in their accounts as the remaining account water of 12.3 GL cannot be delivered.
- The restrictions will be eased or removed once the inflow situation improves sufficiently. The temporary water restriction can be viewed at: [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/temporary-water-restrictions](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/temporary-water-restrictions)

### Seasonal climate outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for October to December suggests a drier and warmer than average period.

The Bureau indicates that the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains neutral. The ENSO is likely to remain neutral over the remainder of 2019. Positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions are forecast to continue through spring. A positive IOD will likely mean below average winter-spring rainfall and above average temperatures.

While the outlook suggests likely more of the same dry conditions, it does not preclude the possibility of individual weather systems bringing significant rainfall at any point in time.

Details can be found at: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/)

### Further information

The next monthly water allocation statement for the Namoi regulated river water source will be available in early October 2019.

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